Retro #28: 1930 Chapel Fulfills 1903 Dream

The 1930 chapel building realized a long-held dream of the Brothers dating back to 1903—a large, permanent place of worship for St. Stanislaus College. After the devastating fire of 1903 destroyed the school, one of the three rebuilt structures included a small temporary chapel on the second floor of the main building. The Brothers could not afford to build a large stand-alone chapel at that time.

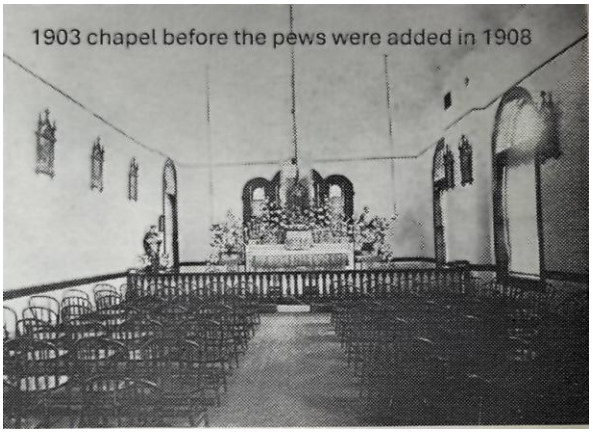
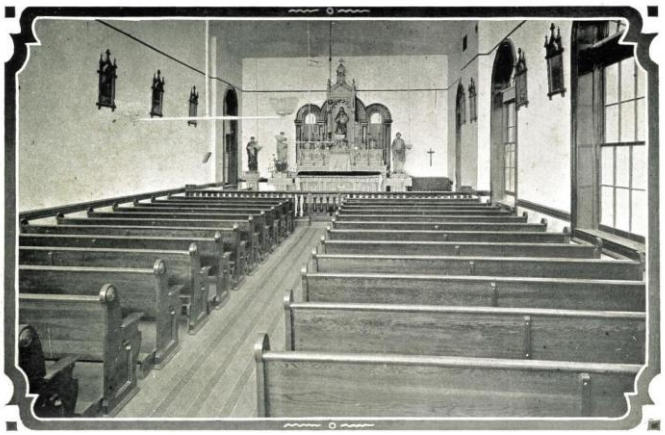
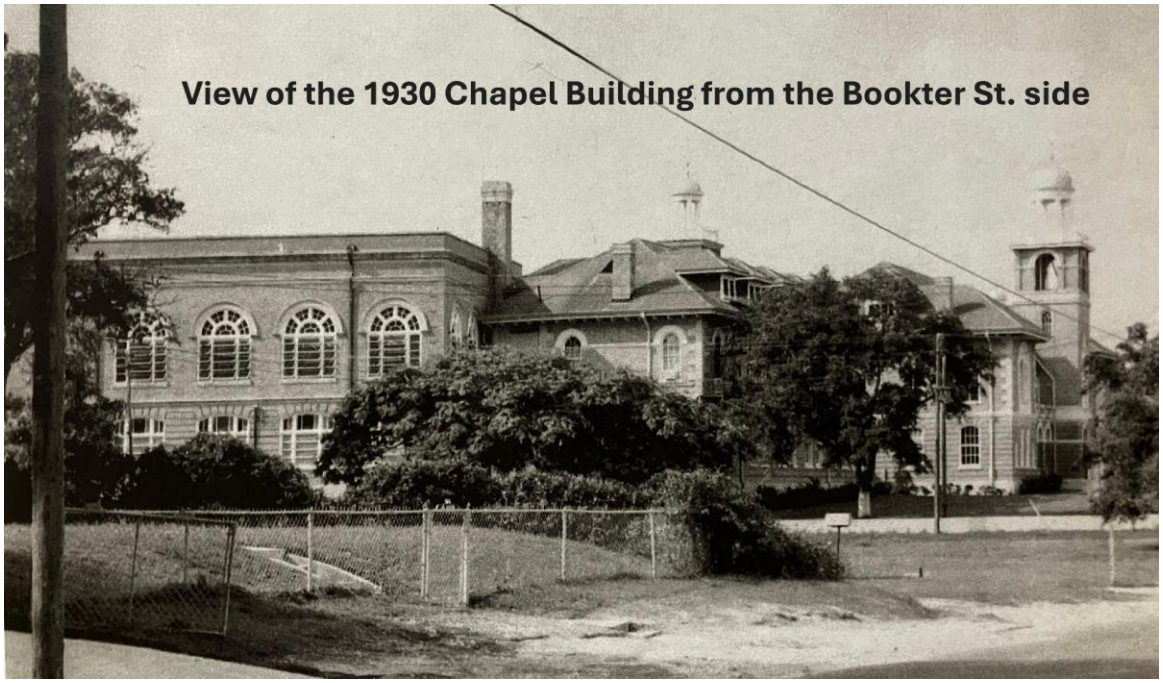
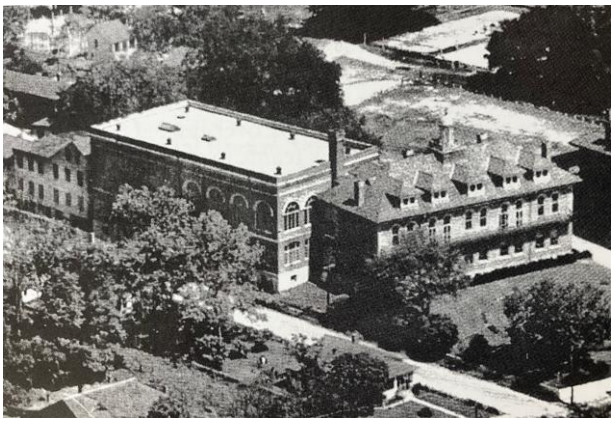


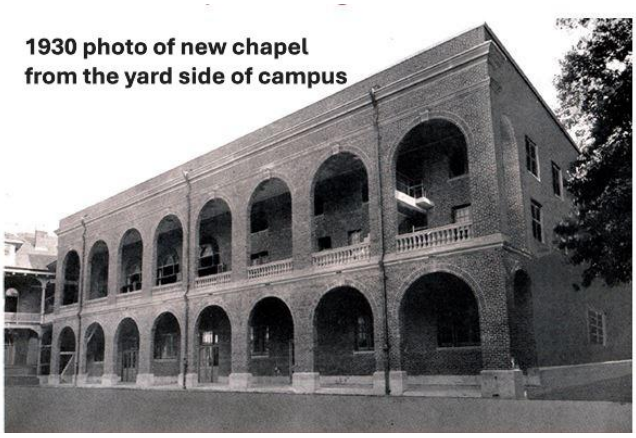
Photo from 1924 yearbook showing pews that were moved to new chapel



By 1930, the modest space could no longer serve the spiritual needs of the 190 resident students. The new chapel, however, was a grand and spacious sanctuary capable of seating all 305 students. The new chapel was built directly behind the school building and butted up against it on the Bookter Street side.







Its elegant design reflected the central role of religion in the school's mission, with a high vaulted ceiling, wide windows to welcome natural light and breezes, and a column-free layout that created an open, reverent space.

Furnishing the new chapel combined tradition and generosity. Two dozen ornate oak pews from the old chapel were brought in, each still bearing brass nameplates honoring their donors. Additional pews were crafted to match, and generous contributions from alumni helped complete the space. The chapel was officially dedicated on Dad's and Grad's Day, November 2, 1930, with *The Times-Picayune* reporting a joyful gathering of hundreds, including Church dignitaries, alumni, and friends, to celebrate with Bishop R.O. Gerow the dedication of the $95,000 building.

For 75 years, the chapel was the spiritual heart of campus, hosting Masses, vow ceremonies, retreats, and quiet moments of reflection for generations of students and Brothers. Sadly, after suffering extensive damage from Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the cherished building was deemed unfit and ultimately demolished in 2020.

Brass donor plates from the pews